THE ANIMAL NOAH SLAUGHTERED INSIDE THE ARK

AND WHY GOD COMMANDED IT

Bibliographic and Reference Document

Primary Sources — Mesopotamian Flood Tradition, Hebrew Canon, Second Temple Pseudepigrapha, Aramaic Targumim, Midrashic and Talmudic Literature, and Modern Pentateuchal Source Criticism

Chronological compendium of the works consulted in the construction of the documentary narrative concerning the clean animals carried in surplus aboard the ark, the divine command behind the first sacrifice of the renewed world, and the foundation of the post-flood order. The compendium spans the Mesopotamian flood epics, the canonical book of Genesis, the Book of Jubilees, the Genesis Apocryphon, the Aramaic Targumim, classical midrash, the Babylonian Talmud, and the critical scholarship of the Pentateuch and the ancient Near East.

Chronological order · Approximate period · Notes on narrative use

Introductory Note

This document gathers, in approximate chronological order, the primary and secondary sources that underpin the documentary film *The Animal Noah Slaughtered Inside the Ark, and Why God Commanded It*. Each work was chosen not only for its historical importance but for the specific contribution it makes to the central axes of the narrative: the asymmetry of the boarding manifest in Genesis 7:2, which brings the clean animals in sevens and the unclean in twos; the source-critical seam between the Priestly and Yahwist accounts of the flood; the year of confinement during which the condemned animals were kept alive; the Mesopotamian antecedents of the post-flood sacrifice; the altar of Genesis 8:20 and the divine resolution prompted by the "pleasing aroma" of Genesis 8:21; and the inauguration of carnivory and the blood prohibition in Genesis 9.

The datings given here follow the majority scholarly consensus, with reference to recent critical work in biblical studies, Assyriology, Second Temple literature, classical midrash, and the comparative study of the ancient Near Eastern flood traditions. Where a work is composed of distinct redactional layers, the period indicated is that of the probable final composition or of the redaction that gave the work its recognizable form. Transliterations of Hebrew and Akkadian terms are given in a simplified form for ease of reading.

This compendium is intended as a point of departure for the viewer who wishes to go deeper into the original sources. It does not replace the direct study of the texts, but offers a chronological map of the development of the traditions that sustain the narrative.

I. Mesopotamian Substrate — Antecedent Flood Tradition (c. 18th–7th century BCE)

The body of cuneiform literature in which the pattern of warned survivor, pitched vessel, loaded animals, released birds, mountain landfall and mountain-top sacrifice first appears — the older stratum against which the Hebrew flood narrative was composed, and which it both inherits and theologically revises.

c. 1600 BCE (Old Babylonian)
The Atrahasis Epic. Babylonian creation-and-flood poem in which humanity is fashioned to bear the labor of the gods and to feed them through offerings. When the flood exterminates humankind, the gods are deprived of their nourishment and starve; the post-flood sacrifice is consequently swarmed by the famished deities. Cited as the explicit statement of the theology of divine hunger against which Genesis defines its own use of the "pleasing aroma." Critical edition: Lambert, W. G., and A. R. Millard. *Atrahasis: The Babylonian Story of the Flood.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969.

c. 1600 BCE (Sumerian)
The Eridu Genesis (Ziusudra Flood Story). Fragmentary Sumerian account of the pious king-survivor Ziusudra, who offers sacrifice to An and Enlil after the deluge. Cited as the earliest attested layer of the Mesopotamian flood-and-sacrifice complex. Edition: Jacobsen, Thorkild. "The Eridu Genesis." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 100 (1981).

c. 1200 BCE (standard version)
The Epic of Gilgamesh, Tablet XI. Utnapishtim's flood narrative recounted to Gilgamesh: the secret warning, the pitched cube of a vessel, the loaded kin and beasts, the grounding on Mount Nimush, the release of the dove, the swallow and the raven, and the mountain-top offering over which the gods gather "like flies." Cited as the closest structural antecedent of the Noah narrative and the source of the shared idiom of the gods smelling the sweet savor of the sacrifice. Standard edition: George, A. R. *The Babylonian Gilgamesh Epic: Introduction, Critical Edition and Cuneiform Texts.* 2 vols. Oxford: Oxford University

Press, 2003.

II. Hebrew Canon (c. 950–400 BCE)

The redactional layers of the Torah that establish the fundamental narrative frame of the flood, the boarding manifest, the altar and the pleasing aroma, and the legal terms of the renewed creation. The juxtaposition of two incompatible boarding commands within a single account opens the interpretive seam explored throughout the narrative.

c. 950–500 BCE
Genesis (ch. 6:19–20). The first, symmetrical boarding command — two of every living thing of all flesh, male and female. Cited as the Priestly (P) manifest, a strand that knows no sacrifice before Sinai and therefore loads no surplus animal aboard. Critical edition: *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia.* Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1997.

c. 950–500 BCE
Genesis (ch. 7:2–3). The second, asymmetrical command — seven of every clean animal and bird, two of the unclean. Cited as the central textual crux of the film: the Yahwist (J) surplus that presupposes the post-flood altar and marks the clean kinds for sacrifice. The Hebrew *shivah shivah* and its ambiguity — seven individuals or seven pairs — is discussed within the narrative.

c. 950–500 BCE
Genesis (ch. 8:20–22). Noah builds an altar and offers burnt offerings of every clean animal and bird; the LORD smells the pleasing aroma (*reah ha-nichoah*) and resolves in his heart never again to curse the ground on account of humanity. Cited as the narrative climax and as the Hebrew reframing of the Mesopotamian sacrifice idiom.

c. 950–500 BCE
Genesis (ch. 9:1–6). The post-flood blessing: the granting of animal flesh as food, the prohibition against consuming blood, and the requirement of a reckoning for blood. Cited as the inauguration of carnivory and the legal frame that binds all subsequent slaughter back to the principle enacted at the altar. The word translated “rainbow” (Hebrew *qeshet*) is also the word for a war-bow, discussed in the narrative as a weapon laid down.

c. 6th–5th century BCE
Leviticus (chs. 1 and 11). The ritual of the burnt offering (*olah*) and the systematic catalogue of clean and unclean animals. Cited to establish that the sacrificial and dietary categories already presupposed in Genesis 7 are formally legislated only at Sinai, and that “pleasing aroma” becomes the standing technical term of the sacrificial code. Critical edition: *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia.* Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1997.

III. Second Temple Literature (c. 3rd century BCE – 1st century CE)

Early Jewish rewritings of the Genesis flood that expand the altar scene, fix its date and its victims, and read the slaughter as the constitutional act of the post-flood world.

c. 2nd century BCE
The Book of Jubilees (ch. 6). A rewritten account of Noah’s sacrifice, dated to the first day of the third month, naming the specific animals offered with their grain, oil and wine, binding the slaughter to the covenant and to the festival of weeks, and prohibiting the consumption of blood. Cited for the oldest sustained interpretation of the offering as the founding rite of the renewed creation. Critical edition:

VanderKam, James C. *The Book of Jubilees.* 2 vols. (CSCO 510–511). Leuven: Peeters, 1989.

c. 1st century BCE
The Genesis Apocryphon (1QapGen ar), col. X. Aramaic retelling of Genesis among the Dead Sea Scrolls, narrating Noah's post-flood atonement and sacrifice for the earth. Cited as a Qumran witness to the expansion of the altar scene. Edition: Fitzmyer, Joseph A. *The Genesis Apocryphon of Qumran Cave 1.* 3rd ed. (Biblica et Orientalia 18B). Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 2004.

IV. Targumic Tradition (late antiquity)

The Aramaic paraphrases of the Torah, which both embroider the altar scene with legend and soften the anthropomorphism of a God who smells the smoke of slaughter.

final redaction c. 4th–7th century CE
Targum Pseudo-Jonathan on Genesis 8:20. Identifies Noah's altar with the altar built by Adam, upon which Cain and Abel had offered, destroyed by the flood and rebuilt by Noah on the same ground. Cited for the legendary genealogy of the altar invoked in the narrative. Edition: Maher, Michael. *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Genesis* (The Aramaic Bible 1B). Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1992.

c. 1st–5th century CE
Targum Onqelos on Genesis 8:21. Renders the sensory anthropomorphism "the LORD smelled" as "the LORD received the offering with favor," a witness to targumic discomfort with the idiom of divine smelling. Edition: Sperber, Alexander. *The Bible in Aramaic*, vol. I. Leiden: Brill, 1959.

V. Rabbinic and Midrashic Literature (c. 3rd–9th century CE)

The aggadic and talmudic traditions that fill the silence of the canon concerning the year inside the ark — the labor of feeding, the creatures spared from death, and the creatures that exceeded the vessel altogether.

c. 5th century CE
Genesis Rabbah (esp. 19, 31, 34). Aggadic midrash on Genesis: the phoenix (*hol*) that asked Noah for no food and was blessed never to taste death (19:5); the reem too vast to enter the ark (31:13); and the eschatological readings of the "pleasing aroma" (34). Cited for the legends of the spared and the condemned animals. Edition: Theodor, J., and Ch. Albeck. *Bereschit Rabba.* Berlin, 1912–1936.

c. 5th–8th century CE
Midrash Tanhuma (Noach). The tradition that Noah did not sleep through the year of the ark, feeding each species at its proper hour. Cited for the portrait of the keeper sustaining the very animals he was commanded to kill. Edition: Buber, Solomon. *Midrash Tanhuma.* Vilna, 1885.

c. 3rd–6th century CE
Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin 108b. Shem's recollection of the unceasing labor of feeding the creatures by day and by night, and the legend of the phoenix that troubled no one. Cited for the rabbinic memory of the ordeal of the ark. Reference edition: *Talmud Bavli*, Vilna (Romm) edition, 1880–1886.

c. 3rd–6th century CE
Babylonian Talmud, Zevachim 113b. The debate on how the colossal reem survived the flood. Cited for the tradition of creatures exceeding the careful arithmetic of pairs and surplus. Reference edition: *Talmud Bavli*, Vilna (Romm) edition, 1880–1886.

VI. Modern Critical Studies (19th–21st century)

Essential secondary scholarship for the historical, critical and literary understanding of the primary sources listed above.

Smith, George. *The Chaldean Account of Genesis.* London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle & Rivington, 1876. — The first publication of the Babylonian flood tablet, announced before the Society of Biblical Archaeology in 1872; the foundation of the comparative study of the deluge narratives.

Wellhausen, Julius. *Prolegomena to the History of Israel.* Edinburgh: Adam & Charles Black, 1885. (German original, *Prolegomena zur Geschichte Israels,* 1883.) — The classic articulation of the Documentary Hypothesis and of the J/P distinction underlying the source seam of the flood account.

Gunkel, Hermann. *Genesis.* Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1901. — Form-critical commentary distinguishing the narrative voices woven through the flood.

Heidel, Alexander. *The Gilgamesh Epic and Old Testament Parallels.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1946. — Column-by-column comparison of the Babylonian and Hebrew flood narratives, including the sacrifice and the divine response.

von Rad, Gerhard. *Genesis: A Commentary.* London: SCM Press, 1961. (German original, 1949.) — Theological commentary on the Yahwist's primeval history.

Speiser, E. A. *Genesis* (Anchor Bible 1). Garden City: Doubleday, 1964. — Philological commentary with sustained attention to the Mesopotamian background of the flood.

Westermann, Claus. *Genesis 1–11: A Commentary.* Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1984. (German original, 1974.) — The monumental verse-by-verse study tracing the source seam through the deluge.

Sarna, Nahum M. *Genesis* (The JPS Torah Commentary). Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989. — On the pre-Sinai clean/unclean distinction and the surplus of the clean animals.

Milgrom, Jacob. *Leviticus 1–16* (Anchor Bible 3). New York: Doubleday, 1991. — Definitive study of the burnt offering, the "pleasing aroma," and the blood prohibition.

VanderKam, James C. *The Book of Jubilees* (Guides to Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha). Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001. — On the Jubilees recasting of Noah's sacrifice and the covenant of the third month.

Final Note on the Nature of this Bibliography

The documentary film *The Animal Noah Slaughtered Inside the Ark, and Why God Commanded It* is a work of creative narrative nonfiction grounded in real historical sources. The selection, articulation and interpretation of those sources are the work of the author, and do not necessarily represent the consensus of any religious tradition or academic school.

The traditions listed here — Mesopotamian, Hebrew canonical, Second Temple pseudepigraphic, Qumranic, targumic, rabbinic-midrashic and talmudic — do not, in their historical origin, form a unified system. The Babylonian flood epics belong to a polytheistic world in which the gods are fed by sacrifice; the Priestly writer of Genesis records no sacrifice before Sinai at all; the Yahwist presupposes it from the beginning; and the later midrash and targum read the altar through assumptions that the biblical redactors would not have shared. The film brings these distinct corpora into contact in order to construct a coherent interpretive narrative, in the tradition of speculative literature that gathers originally dispersed materials under a single poetic argument.

A word of caution on method is owed to the reader. The classical Documentary Hypothesis, in the Wellhausenian form invoked here to describe the J/P seam of the flood, has been substantially revised, refined and in places contested in contemporary Pentateuchal scholarship; the labels “Yahwist” and “Priestly” are used in this narrative as a heuristic for a real and visible textual tension, not as a settled account of the Torah’s composition. The direct study of the primary sources in critical editions, together with the modern scholarship listed in Section VI, is warmly recommended. The real depth of these texts is disclosed only in direct contact with them, and the present narrative functions, at best, as an invitation to that study.

Reference document prepared as a research complement to the documentary film of the same name.